1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 The title of regional governor was also awarded by the Paramount Chief to certain of his favoured lieutenants. These promoted lieutenants, with their segments, retained their positions in the residential system unaltered but they were allowed to keep their own captives, a privilege of all regional governors. It seems probable, from incomplete information, that there were about a dozen regional governors of one kind or the other in the Fort Jameson group in 1898.[11] Despite the early date at which some of the regional governors' segments were formed during the migration, they did not expand as rapidly as did the segments led by the chief's queens and lieutenants, and in 1898 they comprised only a small portion of the State. In this respect the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland were organized differently, for there Read writes that the whole country was divided among regional governors, save for a central capital.[12] One of my informants stated that the head of a segment containing more than one village was never known as the lieutenant of his lord but was called, if he were not a kinsman of his lord, by the title regional governor. This is not true to-day, and in view of the large number of present-day commoner villages which claim to have been founded before the conquest, and whose heads are not regional governors, it seems unlikely to have been true earlier. On the other hand, all regional governors to-day are lords of segments containing more than one village, and this may well have been true before 1898 as well.

[559] [301] There were other minor honours similar to the title of regional governor and often awarded to the same people. These were the right to use the royal descent name *jere*, the right to a special praise name *nkhoma*, and the right to wear ox bones as a decoration.[13]

645 631 Wiese mentions certain special lieutenants who carried out tasks comparable to those of ministers of State. He describes three officials, one a minister for the interior, apparently responsible for the Paramount Chief's domestic affairs; another a minister of war who was also high priest; and the third a master of ceremonies at national festivals. He says that the ministers carried out these special tasks in addition to their ordinary duties as lieutenants, and gives the names of two of the three, who were the first lieutenants of two major sections.[14] Thus although there was some differen-

[11] See Table VII. The sample used in this table contains more villages founded by regional governors than would occur in a representative sample.

[12] Read, 'Standards', p. 16.

[13] Bruwer, *Mbiri*, p. 23; Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 479, and 'Geschichte', p. 198.

[14] Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 469-70 and 'Geschichte', p. 188. These two men were the first lieutenants of segments 14 and 4.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

national ritual of the first-fruits ceremony (*incwala*), which brought all the people to the royal village, was also abandoned before the Ngoni kingdoms were finally established, for no old person alive in the 1930's had seen the *incwala* ceremony.

(*d*) *The ceremonial pattern*

Ngoni songs and dances were performed without the accompaniment of drums and the words of the songs sung in the 1930's were in the Ngoni language. The war-dance, *ligubo*, was still danced at the royal village and at the funerals of Paramounts and Royal Sisters. The *ngoma* dance, performed after the harvest by young men and girls, was encouraged by the two Ngoni Paramounts, who endeavoured to prohibit other dances which were not of Ngoni origin.

Ceremonial dress, especially the war-dress of the men, was well preserved by heads of clans in the 1930's in the central Ngoni kingdom. In both kingdoms the Ngoni leading women wore their traditional bead ornaments on the head and neck and arms, and tied their cloths on festive occasions in the way in which their ancestors wore the long lengths of soft dressed leather.

Only in Ngoni families were to be found the making of milk curds (*amasi*), the cooked blood (*ulubende*), and the stamped maize (*izinkobe*), all of which were traditional foods brought by them from the south.

(*e*) *The linguistic pattern*

In the 1930's the Ngoni language had almost disappeared as a home language, except in Chief Mperembe's area in the northern kingdom. The majority of the older men could still speak and understand Ngoni, and nearly all the men who had been away to work in Southern Rhodesia or the Transvaal had renewed their knowledge of Ngoni or learnt to understand it from working with men who spoke Ndebele, Zulu or Swazi. The texts in this book from the northern kingdom were given in the Ngoni language and translated for me by Y. M. Cibambo. His own texts were written for me in English. The texts from the central kingdom were given in Nyanja and translated by me. The vernacular terms used in this book illustrate the continued use of Ngoni terms for traditional offices and objects, though in the central kingdom many of these were being replaced by Nyanja terms. Words of traditional songs, some ritual formulae, some forms of address, some titles of senior persons or groups —all these were in Ngoni. The younger generation, however, especially if they had not been south and heard Zulu or Ndebele, were not able to make any of the clicks, or to pronounce such double consonants as *dl* and *hl*.

The Ngoni were punctilious about etiquette, and especially about the linguistic terms required by good manners for greeting persons of different rank and seniority, thanking for gifts or for an audience, taking

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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At the dance the warriors wore their full war-dress. Those who had the head-ring wore a little bunch of black feathers sewn together and attached to a skin and looking like a lion's mane, which came out from under the head-ring on the neck, and they tied a strip of other skin over their eyes. Those who had not the head-ring had their heads completely covered and at the side of their face they put rosettes of feather ends so that the head-dress should not hide their sight. The head-dress was of birds' black feathers, especially ravens; they took out the quills so that they were soft and they sewed them together on cowhide, the man's head resting on the skin. On the body and arms they wore a white skin of goat-hair, or a white belt with long hair, and twisted straps of skin reaching to the knee at the loins. The belts were made from the skins of white goats which had long hair and they stitched them. Round the loins they had whole skins of kids both front and back. Some tied *izinkondo*, hides made to look like a tail, at the back. In their ears they had *isicaso*, earrings of ivory, or sometimes of bone or wood. Truly they looked as terrifying as wild beasts when they stood up. So they ornamented themselves. The oldest of the men stuck a tail feather of a crane in the skin strip above the eyes.

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When the dance had begun the women rose to help the men. The Paramount's wives and wives of the men of standing wore the claws of lion and leopard on the top of their hair combed up on the crown and round the [illegible] along with other beads. Ordinary women also wore beads on their heads and necks. All looked very well. Both men and women sang the dance songs and danced. The men spread out in a circle round the edge of the space; the women faced the men at a distance or perhaps they put them in the middle of the ring. All sang, the women commencing, the men joining in or responding. The women had little sticks or reeds in their hands shooting high up. Others came forward and went into the middle of the circle or half circle, and went singing and dancing and shaking their sticks and thrusting out their necks.

539 726b

When the dance was over the herald told the army to scatter to their villages until the provisions and snuff had been prepared, and on such and such a day they were to gather again in the Paramount's village. On the day of the gathering of the army they brought their dress and food, the sections dressing as they were in the kraal. The herald called again, *'Uyezwa na'*, 'Do you hear?' *'Utsho njalo yenkosi, uti, Ayihete'*, 'Thus saith the Paramount, fall in.' Then all the sections stood up, each by itself but now joined together in close order, shields and spears raised above them. Then the chief *induna* or someone else who had been chosen told them the enemy stockade which it was proposed to attack, and the plan of campaign. When the sections had heard, they began to march out of the kraal one by one.

The whole day the sections had been kept in the kraal, no one was allowed to go to a house and say good-bye. Those outside were not allowed to greet the warriors inside. Children were kept out of the way, lest they should greet their fathers as they went out to war. If a man was greeted as he went out to war, the fear was that he would not come back but would die there.

When the army went out in the evening near sunset it slept near the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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brothers of the dead Paramount who acted as regents. Thus Ngwana was cremated in Ulosi before crossing the Zambesi, and Mputa was cremated in the river Lichiningo in Songea in Tanganyika. This was confirmed by an informant of the Gama clan who were for a time under the central Ngoni Paramount in Songea and later were allied with the northern Ngoni. He said 'We killed Mputa, the *inkosi*, when fighting, and his people burned him because it was their custom in burying to burn.'

An old woman who came from Portuguese territory to see me in the central kingdom said that when Zintambira I died the Portuguese made them bury him 'in a box'. The onlookers in Mcakatha at the time of my interview with the old woman said 'Yes, they were not allowed to burn him.'

The central Ngoni leaders referred often to the ritual significance of the cremation of their Paramount, followed by the washing of the ashes into the stream 'to strengthen the land'. On my first arrival in the central kingdom I was questioned closely by several of the big *izinduna* and *ahumuzana* about the practice of cremation in England. They alleged that, under the influence of the local mission, the Paramount Gomani II had said that he wished to be buried in a coffin with Christian burial rites. They were much concerned about this, because of the effect on the strength and status of his successor and on the country as a whole. 'If he is not burned his children will not be honoured and will only be as *ahumuzana*. Is it right that another tribe, the English, should come and change our customs?' Great relief was expressed when I told them that Christians were cremated in England with full Christian ritual, and also when I told them that the ashes of one of the early Scottish missionaries in northern Ngoniland had been brought back by his widow to lie there.

The following account of the funeral of Cikusi was given to Rattray:

'When the chief of the whole country dies, they do not immediately inform the people of his own village. First they send messengers to other villages, to tell them 'the clouds have fallen today'. They do this because they fear, 'if we tell his own men first, they may go and commence to forage and plunder, as is done at a chief's death'. Then all begin to assemble, all the war bands from the different villages, shields in hand. They are decked out in their feather head-dresses, and wristlets and anklets of goat's hair; (the bands) glitter as if it were all for show and not for a funeral. Then some of the old men dress the dead chief for burial. The knees are bent against the chest, and the arms bent, the hands are laid against the cheeks, and they take a small gourd-cup and make him grasp it in his hand. When they bathe him, they take grass from a forest glade. They do not wash the body, but only the face. The water they use they do not draw from the well where people drink, but take water from a running stream. The body is not anointed with oil. Then they take the spleen of an ox and deck his head until it all glitters, and then take the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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when eating meat. The lesser wives sat on the ground, which was cleaned and smeared often with cow's dung.

The second *induna* of the village was the one who put the meat on the *ingcwembe*, or big platter of the *inhosikazi*, and placed it before her. She herself or her *nkanzi* (co-wife) divided the meat for the other women, the wife of the *induna* helping her. After they had eaten, each *inhosikazi* called for an *ingcwembe* from her house for the meat to be given to her attendants.

The Life of the Royal Women
by NaNdumbu

formerly the big wife of the late Chief Njolomole Nzunga I in the central kingdom

Old Njolomole had many wives, great and small. His huts were well made, and in the middle was the 'big house'. They made a fence to go round all the huts, and its appearance was very good. [361 351]

He was fond of sitting on the *bwalo*, and all his wives cooked *nsima* and took many baskets to the *bwalo*. He himself ate alone, but afterwards gave food to the big people and they in turn to the children who were waiting on the *bwalo*. If a stranger came, he did not lack food, for the chief gave food to strangers and beer. So all strangers praised his behaviour. And he was known far and wide in the land for his comely behaviour. [574]

When the days for *ngoma* were near he was going to the stores to buy many cloths to divide them to all his wives. Especially he was giving them to NaNdumbu his big wife to divide. Those cloths were all of one kind. On the day of dancing *ngoma* all the women wore these cloths and came on the *bwalo* with the chief. The people were astonished to see the women dressed alike. Njolomole excelled among all the people, and all praised him.

In the hut of NaNdumbu there were girls to sweep and to pound, and NaNdumbu was just sitting, no pounding for her.

Njolomole was very fond of hunting and when he killed animals in the hunt he divided them among his wives. Then he died and left his wives. From that time his wives have been very poor, and some have gone away to their own homes. Those who are here have been married by other men. Although the men dance *ngoma*, those women cannot dance it because they were greatly praised when they danced with fine cloths, but they cannot dance with poor cloths, no. So when people dance they just look on. Those women can dance *ngoma* in other villages, but here in their own village, no. Because they grieve very much to see the tomb of their husband who was dancing with them.

The Clothing of Women
by Yesaya Cibambo

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Today Ngoni women are not easily recognized because they have taken foreign customs of clothing. Long ago Ngoni women were easily distinguished by their hair. They did not shave their hair except when their husband died. It was washed carefully and oiled and combed upwards to the top of the head in the *isihlutu*. The oil was *ipehla*, clarified butter. This was done every two or three days, or every day if they were grand women. They decorated it with small strings of beads dangling from a [301]

thorn stuck at the top of the *isihlutu*, and round it they put narrow bands of beads (*intuyeya* and *isincwayo*) arranged in layers. Royal women wore leopard and lion claws among the beads. Round the neck and on the arms they wore coils of brass wire (*amasongo*) which they got from the Arabs, or *izipote*, strings of beads wound round a piece of cloth. The kilt of soft dressed leather (*isidwaba*) reached from the waist to the knee, and wrapped well over. A long piece of soft leather (*ingcayi*) was fastened on the left shoulder and reached a little below the knees. On the edges of the *ingcayi* were fastened small bells made of brass (*ngomani*). Ngoni women did not like to cut their bodies with tattoo marks. They said it was ugly. The *inkosikazi* might decorate other wives at the *ngoma* dance because she had a large store of beads and wire and leather cloths.

The common features of the life of leading women as illustrated in these texts were: the number of attendants and servants in their households and their consequent freedom from manual work; the etiquette surrounding life in the *indlunkulu* and the big house, and the formality of hospitality, beer-drinks and dances; relationships with their *induna*, and with their husbands, and, as illustrated by Margaret Jere, with the paternal grandmother who supervised their upbringing when they were young.

In addition to the *induna* in charge of the big house, the royal women and leading women in the villages of chiefs and *alumuzana* were surrounded by a number of young girls and serving women. These were known in pre-European days as domestic slaves or servants (*micetho*), girl companions (*izidandani*), nurse girls (*alezi*) and older women attendants (*agogo*). Informants said that in pre-European days there were fifteen or twenty girls in each royal household and the number was constantly being added to when female slaves were captured in war and allocated as servants to the Paramount's wives. All the texts in this chapter refer to the fact that the royal women and the leading women did no work, and there was always a nostalgic refrain from senior women informants about the time devoted to hair-dressing and beauty treatments, to 'just sitting', and to dancing and drinking beer, while all the household tasks and the care of the children fell to the servants. The Ngoni royal women, even in the 1930's, commanded the labour of six to ten women and girls in each household. The hard physical work of fetching firewood and water, pounding grain, preparing vegetables and often cooking too, was done largely by servants in the Paramount's and chief's villages where I stayed. There were young nurse girls and older women to help with the children and with the adolescent girls. There were no longer any domestic slaves, and the domestic helpers, who were often distant relatives of the wives, appeared to enjoy the prestige of being attached to an important house.

The royal women in pre-European days were distinguished by the clothes and ornaments they wore which were reserved for the royal

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
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8. A well-filled grain store

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[facing page 48]

9. Winnowing

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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12. Chiefs' wives wearing leopard claws

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13. Chiefs' wives leading in the dance

[facing page 65]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

choice and variety of food, was primarily to please him, and 593
to meet the incessant claims on his hospitality when visitors 592
came. A well-ordered and harmonious household also pleased
him, and conversely the sounds of women quarrelling an- [183]
gered him and violated his canons of accepted Ngoni be-
haviour. It was his wife's task to supervise the household 357
helpers, who were mostly non-Ngoni, and to make them 592
conform to Ngoni patterns by controlling their rages, instead
of yelling at each other and hurling accusations of witchcraft
at those with whom they were angry.

Ngoni women also took a serious view of another aspect of 562
pleasing their husbands, namely attention to their person and 593
dress. The old elaborate hair-dressing of Ngoni women, the 302
scrupulous washing of their bodies with sweet-smelling leaves, 515
the use of oil and clarified butter on the skin and hair, and 901
the careful tying and draping of cloths and arranging of
bead headbands and necklaces—these all were forms of
beauty treatment and personal hygiene designed to please
the husband. They also reinforced the self-respect and author- [565]
ity of well-born Ngoni women, marking them out by their
well-groomed appearance from the 'workers' and 'helpers'
who surrounded them.

The young Ngoni child, up to the age of six or seven, grew 602
up in a women's world of the kind just described. His mother 855
was learning from his paternal grandmother the increasing [606]
duties and responsibilities of an Ngoni wife, although she
was supposed to have learned some of them in her own home
from her mother before marriage. We saw in Chapter II how
the social horizons of a small Ngoni child were never of a
narrow type, restricted to his individual family. The care of
a child, especially between the time of weaning and the
coming of second teeth, was the concern of a number of
women in addition to his own mother, from whom he was
snatched away at weaning, and, for a time at least, kept
away from her household for eating and sleeping.

Among the female population of a village most nearly [561]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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16. Traditional hair style

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17. Girls sitting correctly [facing page 97]

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

given to giggling and putting their head on one side when asked questions. They took their school work seriously in order to show that they, the Ngoni girls, were the intelligent ones. They were also aware that the number of cattle to be transferred at their marriage would be greater according to whether they finished school in Standard II, III, IV, or even VI.

Apart from going to school, which was only for the daughters of relatively forward-looking Ngoni fathers, the girls continued to take part in the daily routine of the household. They and their companions, according to their growth and strength and pleasure, did a little pounding, fetching water, grinding grain, roasting ground-nuts. In a large household, where there were many helpers, the daughters of the family only did as much as they felt inclined of the domestic chores. As they said: 'It was like our play.' They spent more time with the young children, or washing themselves and their clothes by the stream. Combing and dressing their hair, rubbing fat or oil on their skin, threading beads, plaiting grass or fibres, learning how to make Ngoni bead designs for head bands or wristlets—all these formed the lighter and more amusing side of the daily routine.

From among the girls in this exclusive and protected girls' circle, Ngoni girls chose a particular friend, whom they always addressed as 'my friend', even if she were a classificatory sister or cousin. As with the boys in the dormitory this friend was a confidante to whom a girl could talk freely about her life in the compound, her likes and dislikes among the other girls and women, her ideas about suitors and marriage. The friend was always from another compound and of a leading Ngoni clan. The two friends made bracelets and necklets for each other, and went to bathe in the stream together. Sometimes the friendship lasted until the girls were married and separated. At times it broke up suddenly in a violent quarrel. There was however a curious tenacity about these friendship pacts, and they were more often maintained

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

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18. Chiefs' wives

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[facing page 112]

19. Girls dancing *Ngoma*

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
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the songs had veiled allusions to sexual intercourse and sex organs but the majority were songs recalling historical events. Others warned young wives against jealousy and strife in polygamous households, and these again were couched in veiled language, because the Ngoni preferred allusive references to anything touching on sex life.

When the girl and her companion emerged from the hut of seclusion, they were fully dressed in a short leather skirt, cut on a circular pattern, and a long leather cloak often trimmed with a fringe of tiny brass bells or small copper beads which were heirlooms belonging to the girl's father's house. The girl who was known as the 'owner of the pre-marriage ceremony' wore strips of meat strung together like beads hanging over her chest. The fat from the kidneys (always used in Ngoni ritual) was twisted into a necklace, and the skins of cows' tails, flayed and spread out were worn hanging from the waist, one in front and one behind. At the close of the ceremonies the skins and fat used for ornament were burned by a stream and the ashes swept into the water —again a typical Ngoni ritual act.

In one sense this ritual was a form of social announcement that the girl was now ready for marriage, and the marriage negotiations and full marriage ceremony followed soon after. It was also a way of emphasizing the father's pride in his daughter, and he showed it by the lavish feasting and beer, by the standard of performance of the dances and songs and by decorating the girl with meat, fat, and skins from the cattle of his house. This was the last act he performed on behalf of his daughter, for the actual marriage ceremony took place at the bridegroom's village. It showed him as a man of substance, because only rich men and leading men could afford the outlay. It also showed the girl as a virtuous woman, for the ritual was never performed unless the girl was a virgin, and the senior women had been able, after examining her, to say to her father: 'Her cattle are full.'

This ritual was given up about the time the missions began

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

in with a smooth round stone. This too was hard work, but every now and then the grandmother, watching and supervising, handed out a lump of clarified fat which quickly brought up a fine polish. The girls were told that this high polish was necessary so that people might sit with pleasure on the floor, and so that all dust and refuse showed up clearly in the morning sweeping of the hut. The floor of the veranda was similarly polished, and, as we saw in Chapter IV, the more important huts had a smeared and polished space all round the front.

In arranging the inside of the hut girls were taught the right places to put the water-jars and other pots, the baskets and mats, and the bundles of cloth and ornaments belonging to the 'house' wrapped in mats or packed neatly in wooden or tin chests. Brass and bead ornaments, and special cloths for use by men and women on ceremonial occasions, were all kept in the huts of leading women. The ornaments worn by such a woman during her lifetime were returned to the 'house' after her death and looked after in the hut of her successor. These possessions and heirlooms were periodically brought out into the sun, and shaken and aired or polished. A housewife was publicly shamed if she did not take care of such property, and people spread stories that she was careless about keeping the wealth of the house in good repair. Girls were reminded of this when they were called to help at such a 'spring cleaning', and told as a warning: 'So-and-so in that village over there, she let the insects eat the cloth of the house. The mildew spoiled the bead-bands and waistcoats. The green rust came on the brass wire. She was shamed when men spoke about it.'

Part of the property of each household was the food stored after harvest or gathered from the bush. Formerly the Ngoni stored their staple cereal in pits dug in the kraal, mudded and fired and covered with a flat rock. The same kind of pit was sometimes made in the side veranda for storing sweet potatoes, but nothing was stored in the kraal.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
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been warned ahead to pound maize and make yeast of sprouting finger millet. They then embarked on a three-day cooking programme in large pots over a log fire in the compound. 'Sweet' beer with a low alcoholic content was drawn off after the first cooking, and the rest was left to simmer and ferment until it was of the correct thickness, flavour, and alcoholic strength.

Ngoni women's crafts

Formerly when the Ngoni used leather for clothing, their women took over the skins after they had been dressed, rubbed in fat and oil to make them soft, and darkened them with charcoal made of maize stalks. They then cut and sewed the circular skirts which had a number of gores. The use of cloth, bought first from the Arabs and later from European and Indian traders, entirely replaced the former leather clothing, but senior Ngoni women still had a strong preference for a heavy dark blue cloth which they thought resembled the former leather.

Two special skills were maintained by high-born Ngoni families and they carefully trained their girls in them. One was the use of beads, threaded and sewn together to form standardized geometrical patterns, many of which had particular significance as denoting a leaf, an eye, a horn of a cow. These beads of different sizes in strong colours of red, yellow, green, blue, as well as black and white, were made into headbands, wristlets, belts, collars, and the bead 'waistcoats' worn by the men in their war-dances. Each Ngoni bride expected to take to her new home at least one food basket which she had elaborately embroidered with beads in these standard designs.

The other skill to which we have referred more than once was that of beauty treatment. Ngoni women despised and disliked the local custom of facial markings and body markings. They treated their skin with clarified fat or butter, and combed their hair with long thorns or bone combs. After

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
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302 washing they applied the fat to their hair and combed it out, de-kinking it now and then with strips of bamboo bound tightly to the head. They scented their hair with the juice of sweet-smelling leaves, and dressed it formerly in the high chignon. As they gave that up, they took to wearing headcloths of different-coloured cloth so arranged that
● [301] beadbands across the forehead could be worn. Ngoni girls needed no urging to take this beauty treatment very seriously, and before a big *ngoma* dance, gave it much time and thought.

554 Only the big wives and elder sisters of chiefs could wear
301 the necklace and headpiece of leopard or lion claws. They were the distinguishing mark of an Ngoni 'princess' or 'queen'.

The art of cleanliness

181 I have called this section an 'art' because the Ngoni took
356 an aesthetic pleasure in achieving and maintaining certain
515 standards in their homes and in their persons, which were held up to young adults as being highly desirable. This
182 emphasis on a particular kind of cleanliness, while putting up with much that was not clean in their surroundings, was only one of several inconsistencies in Ngoni culture. The appreciation of a desire for this kind of cleanliness had not
[751] necessarily any connexion with hygienic cleanliness. It was more closely associated with the Ngoni love of orderliness and scrupulous attention to detail in the appearance of persons and places. It was also connected with what they regarded as comfort and good living. The effect of mission teaching about health and sanitation, and of government
[177] courses held for chiefs to instruct them in modern welfare measures, often caused confusion among Ngoni elders. Sometimes their traditional standards of cleanliness coincided with modern hygienic standards, and sometimes they did not. In any case it was seldom that Europeans recognized that the Ngoni had any standards to begin with, and they

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

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III. Anointing the bride's feet with gall. The master of ceremonies rubs gall over the bride, who sits on a mat between a woman of her party and the guide.

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IV. The gall-bladder is safely pinned in the bride's hair. Thus decorated, she will return to her own village.

[Facing P. 129]

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

846 she rises early to go and fasten the belt on the infant. Should the man not have a second wife, the one to put the belt on the child is his (the man's) sister. The man does not immediately see the face of his child; some day these same old women make him take it in his arms [hands]. The father then makes them a present of beads.

854 IV. When they notice the infant is beginning to
852 grow his bottom teeth and to smile at people, the elders tell the father that, "Now you must bring
● 301 the child into the village." The child's grandmother ties up beforehand some *lizango*. She begins with a little strip of calico, and rolls it round and round the medicine charm and along with a piece of string; then takes a little piece of skin and sews it over this, and takes some beads and sews them on the skin. The mother cooks some relish beforehand. That evening the husband and wife sleep together (this is "to bring the child into the village.") She cuts off the old belt the child is wearing, and puts on the new one with the *lizango* medicine in it, some more of the medicine, similarly tied up, is placed under the infant's head. In the morning she takes the relish to present to the two old women, and then takes the *lizango* she had placed under the child's head and ties it round his neck, and then takes a belt of beads, interspersed
[189] with little wooden charms, and adorns the child. When in time the *lizango* belt breaks, they do not look for it or replace it. In the event of an infant dying before he has been "brought into the village,"
766 they bury it in some open glade, near the edge of some stream, its funeral is attended by women only. Should a man tramp over the spot where the child
[153] is buried, he "has taken" the disease known as *nyesi*. Such a grave is known as *nsenye*.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

585 young wife is made cook beer, and on the day it is drunk the spleens are burned and the bead girdle [301] unravelled, and the girl will make bracelets of it.

VIII

MARRIAGE (*Chipeta*)

584 I. When a girl and a man love one another, they make each other presents in secret, and when this has gone on for some time, they say, "But let these things fly away on the wind now and be heard by people." Then the man goes and tells the elders of his village, saying, "Go and ask for me at so and so's. I would live with them, for I am miserable (here)." Then some of the elders go there to ask for him, saying, "Here we have seen a (girl's) basket, and we would remain with you, for where we are we are unhappy." Then the headman replies, "First of all you must return, when we have asked the child if she consents you shall hear again." Then the deputation go off home. The man calls his children, he sees the one who is almost a woman, and asks her, saying, "So and so have come and say they want you to stay with them." And the child answers, "Well, what can I say, words which you may speak I obey." And they from the man's village return again, saying, "We have come about that proposal which we mentioned yesterday; we are most anxious for what we asked." Then the chief says, "Let the man come, he shall live here, I do not refuse." And they go back home and tell the man, saying, "We

/10 cont'd/

304 tribal mark and a hole made for individual ornamentation. Earrings,
[301] beads, and other ear ornaments are worn, including safety pins.
[304] Young girls from time to time make black rectangular marks on their
[302] cheeks by pressing on to them strips of nkholosa grass. These marks are quite black at first, and gradually lose their colour over a period of a year. Scarification of the face and body is carried out on both men and women for ornament as well as for medication, but there
[531] is very little regularity of pattern, save for the inverted crescent mark made between the eyebrows of women. This is the Nsenga
[619] tribal mark.

For dancing, most people wear their best clothes, and girls
535 and young women carry whistles on lanyards round their necks. When dancing ngoma, the most important tribal dance, miniature shields are carried, and a special type of knobbed stick that is held aloft. Less frequently seen are the wrist and ankle trappings, and skin garments that used to be associated with this and other regimental dances. Nowadays, women's skirts and frocks are sometimes seen worn by men on such occasions.

Single-ended and double-ended drums are used as accompani-
534 ments to dancing, while boys play hand pianos. Girls play on a single string fiddle made from a reed. Whistles are bought from the stores. Old fashioned fiddles with gourd resonators are rare.

Boys spend much of their time making and playing with toys
524 of various kinds. Animals, men, and motor cars are fashioned out of mud, while more elaborate motor cars are made from mealie stalks. A favourite toy consists of two wheels, up to six inches in diameter, on an axle with a handle some four or five feet long, terminated in another wheel of the same size. This construction, made of straw, representing the elements of a motor car, is pushed along by boys of ages four to ten.

The well-known game, involving four rows of twelve holes, with three stones in each hole, is played by men, usually in holes scooped out in the ground. A favourite game of girls and boys consists of throwing up beans with one hand and catching them again

4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909) 1910 FT7 Yao / Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

The Angoni men collect little bunches of hair together and bind them with grass so that they stick up all over the head or are restricted to the front part of the scalp where, when they get long, they hang down over the face. Fancy hair shaving is never seen among the women except those recently from the coast. There is no particular sex difference in methods of "doing the hair"; the coiffure is not altered after marriage and no wigs are used, neither are any colours used to adorn the hair. Ornaments worn in the hair are few, occasionally some bead-work by young girls or a feather by boys, and more especially Angoni. Combs, ornaments with bead-work are found.

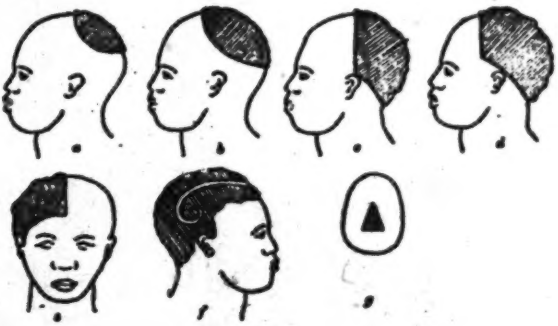

FIG. 7.

(*a*) Chipeta, "Tumbo"; (*b*) Angoni ♂; (*c*) Atonga ♀; (*d*) Makanja and Machinga ♀ "Mbelibe"; (*e*) A'mam who has attended one Malipo and must attend another in a few days; (*f*) Fanciful shaving; (*g*) New-born child.

The amount of hair on the face is very variable, and the treatment of it equally so. As a rule there is little, if any. Epilation is commonly practised and a strong growth of hair is shaved. On the other hand beards, etc., of considerable size are seen sometimes, and these are usually not trimmed. The longest beard I measured was 38 cm. from the chin to tip. It was kept rolled up.

The Atonga seem to have more hair on face than other tribes, their moustaches resembling those seen on Japanese.

Body.—Beads are worn by nearly every woman, either at the neck or round the wrist or the waist.

A string of large blue beads is most commonly worn round the neck by girls and women after *Inyago*. At initiation ceremonies ropes of small blue beads are sometimes worn. Those worn round the body are single strings of beads of various kinds. They are not always worn, and the wearing I think is discontinued during menstruation.

Bead aprons are found. Beads round wrists and ankles are worn in simple strings. Dancing boys sometimes wear a bead necklace, otherwise beads are never seen on males.

4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909)1910 FT7 Yao FT7
Marawi FR4
Ngoni FR5
Bemba FQ5

M 301 Necklaces, most commonly for children, are made of a number of little square pieces of hippo ivory strung together, ornamented with geometrical designs.

M 789 Medicine is often carried in a little packet suspended round the neck, as also charms of various kinds. The medicine may be some powdered charred roots or little twigs, leaves, etc., of some tree; these are sometimes now wrapped up in a Y [789] piece of paper on which is written some extract from the Koran (among Mohammedan Yao); this is then sewn in a little piece of calico and adorned with beads and suspended round the neck with a string.

Charms take various forms. Small pieces of wood or, to guard against attack M 301 by lion, teeth are worn. Armlets of the same kind are worn against sickness, and others are worn by Angoni, made of beads to which knives are attached. Bracelets of ivory, plaited grass and elephant tail hairs are also worn.

N 301 Metal and wirework bracelets are commonly worn by Angoni, also twisted wire finger rings and rings of lead and ivory. Heavy brass ankle rings and spiral brass leg and arm rings 6 inches and 8 inches wide are worn by some of the women (Atonga).

B 301 Bracelets cut from the nail of the elephant's foot are worn by Awemba hunters, and little finger rings cut from the scale of the ant-eater are worn as medicine against fever by headmen.

Belts made of wound copper wire are worn round the waists by Wankonde.

M 302 The use of pigments applied to the body is very limited. I have seen stripes of these, white and red, on the faces of young women, boys and dancers, generally M [439] after some ceremony. The significance I do not know. Pigments are now obtained from Indian traders, and I do not know how old the custom is. There is no beautification of face, body, nails, and eyes by pigments. The only application made to the skin is castor and ground-nut oils to keep it soft—no scents are used.

CLOTHING.

M Y N 291 [855] Among tribes of Nyasaland the amount of clothing worn varies very considerably from nothing to European garments.

Of the large majority, however, including Maffanja people, Yao and Angoni, one may speak generally.

The young children commonly run about naked, or have a strip of cloth covering the pudenda, supported by a string round the waist.

M Y N [556] Among the adult population the amount of clothing depends largely on the affluence of the individual, and those who cannot afford much have little clothing. A man wears a strip of calico supported in front and behind by a string round the waist, a woman a piece of calico 18 inches wide reaching from the middle of the thighs to the umbilicus.

Of the more prosperous, the men wear calico from a little below the knee to the waist, carefully wrapped round the body, and kept in position by some kind of belt; sometimes it is folded across the upper part of the chest or sometimes crossed over in front and two ends tied behind the neck.